

Squadron in Hurlburt Field, FL. He was 27 years old.

Captain Roland was killed in combat at Camp Antonik in Helmand Province, Afghanistan. He was driving the lead vehicle in a convoy when that convoy was attacked by enemy combatants dressed as friendly Afghan forces.

It was a complex attack. The first warning that something was wrong came when an enemy combatant approached Captain Roland's vehicle. When he was within 5 feet of the vehicle, he began to raise his weapon. Without hesitation, Captain Roland's first thoughts were for the safety of his fellow servicemembers. He yelled "Insider attack" while radioing a warning to all vehicles in the convoy. Simultaneously, he drove in reverse, away from the gunmen, to protect his passengers.

Tragically, a split second later, the lead gunman who had approached the vehicle, shot Captain Roland, instantly killing him, but the message he had conveyed over the radio gave the other personnel in his convoy the opportunity to take cover and ready their weapons. Because of his warning, American casualties were fewer and the enemy combatants were neutralized, including the one who killed Captain Roland.

For his actions, Captain Roland was posthumously awarded the Silver Star for Valor. The citation accompanying the award read:

Captain Roland's actions are in keeping with the finest traditions of military heroism and reflect distinct credit upon himself, the NATO Special Operations Component Command . . . and the United States Air Force.

Over the course of his military career, Captain Roland received several other awards, medals, and declarations, including the Bronze Star, Purple Heart, Meritorious Service Medal, Air Force Achievement Medal, Air Force Organizational Excellence Award, National Defense Service Medal, and NATO Medal.

Captain Roland was born at Ellsworth Air Force Base in Rapid City, SD. His father, retired U.S. Air Force Col. Mark Roland, moved frequently for assignments, and Matthew grew up in Abilene, TX, and Albuquerque, NM, before the family settled in Lexington, KY, where Matthew attended Lexington Catholic High School.

In high school, it was clear to many that Matthew was a driven young man who knew what he wanted out of life. Tim Wiesenhahn, his cross-country coach at Lexington Catholic, remembered that. Tim said:

He really wanted to be successful. I like to say he was driven to succeed. You just kind of knew he was going to be a leader. . . . The best runners really work at it, and Matt really wanted to be successful, and he put in the work.

A friend of Matthew's from high school, Clint Roberts, saw the same determination in the future airman. He said:

I don't remember a time when Matt didn't know what he wanted to do with his life.

From the time we met at cross-country practice in high school until the last time I talked to him, Matt always seemed like he controlled his life and path in a way that everyone strives to.

Matthew attained the Eagle Scout rank in Boy Scouting and graduated from Lexington Catholic in 2006. He entered the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, CO, where he graduated in 2010 with a bachelor of science degree in aeronautical engineering. Matthew then completed the rigorous special tactics program in 2012 to become a special tactics officer. As an STO, he was a team leader who supervised combat preparedness training for a 35-member team. He was a military static line and free-fall parachutist, Air Force combat scuba diver, and a joint terminal attack controller. He led reconnaissance, strike, and recovery missions. He was deployed three times over his 5 years of service in the Air Force, twice to Afghanistan and once to Africa, and wherever he served, he gained a reputation as a rock during stressful times, always cool under pressure yet always easy to befriend.

Capt. Ben Self, a fellow special tactics officer, said:

The attribute that stood out to me most was his unflinching stoic presence when we needed it most. I relied on Matt when times were toughest, and I will continue to do so as his memory lives on through all of us.

"Matt was anything but typical," says Col. Paul Brister, his commander. "On the battlefield, he was a lion—lethal, precise, humble and compassionate. He was always flawless. I'm convinced I learned more from him than he could ever learn from me."

Another airman said of Matthew: "He was unquestionably our leader . . . not just by the [regulations] or rank, but through his ability to command our respect and trust as men."

A letter written to Matthew's parents after his death revealed what Matthew did when off duty. "Besides Matt's great qualities as a teammate, air commando and USAF officer, Matt has two memorable habits," wrote LTC John Sannes and CSM Dwight Utley.

The letter continued:

He loved to walk around in his American flag shorts, and he loved his mom's chocolate chip cookies. As a testimony to Matt's generous heart, he burned his legs helping a contractor weld a gate while wearing his flag shorts, and he always shared his cookies with the guys on his team.

Matthew's loved ones are foremost in our thoughts as I share his story with my Senate colleagues and the entire Nation today. They include his parents, Colonel Mark and Barbara Roland; his sister, Erica Roland; his niece, Willamina Roland; his grandparents, Dr. and Mrs. Earl Roland; his grandmother, Rita Thomas; and many other beloved family members and friends.

Matthew's final resting place is Arlington National Cemetery, not far from where we stand. He was buried with full military honors.

One of Matthew's fellow airmen said this about hearing of his death:

[Matthew] brought America to the tent flaps and mud walls of our enemies on two continents. . . . He did not compromise on what he believed, and the nation is lucky he spent his time and energy protecting her.

I couldn't agree more. I am sure my colleagues agree that America is indeed lucky to have had Capt. Matthew D. Roland fighting for our freedoms. I would like his family to know that the Members of the Senate honor his service and his sacrifice and will be forever grateful.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The minority leader is recognized.

CONTINUING RESOLUTION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I have been asked a number of times walking into my office this morning if there has been an agreement on the Zika funding and the continuing resolution, which is to keep our government open and funded. No, we have not is the answer. We have made progress. I am encouraged by the headway we have made. But as I said before, as Democrats, we are going to be cautious. There is still work to be done before we can say there has been an agreement made.

TERROR ATTACKS IN NEW JERSEY, NEW YORK, AND MINNESOTA

Mr. REID. Mr. President, many Americans are taking the news about this weekend's terror attacks in New Jersey, New York, and even Minnesota very seriously. As a country, we are always stunned when these violent acts occur, and we are absolutely sickened by the acts of violence of this terrorist activity. We grieve with the victims, their families, and their loved ones.

I had a long, thorough briefing today by the FBI. I appreciate their good work always. They have a difficult job doing everything they can to make sure we are safe.

I am aware of the many people injured in these cowardly attacks, including police officers. I wish them all a full and complete recovery. Despite the many injured, we are very grateful that no one was killed in these attacks. It is a credit to both law enforcement and America's terrific, good, brave first responders.

Earlier today, the suspect wanted in connection with these cowardly attacks was shot and apprehended by police officers, but, of course, not before he wounded two of these police officers. These officers' quick response most likely kept Americans safe.

These events remind us of these brave men and women who risk their lives every day to protect the American people. First responders in New York, New Jersey, and Minnesota rushed into danger this weekend to protect innocent people. They certainly saved lives. Now we must do everything we can to ensure justice is